

**Minutes from February 16th 2016 Faculty Senate Academics Committee meeting
12:30-1:30 PM, MB 118**

Members present: Ingo Schranz, Charlotte Wright, Franc Hudspeth, Emilie Beltzer (new chairperson)

Member(s) absent: Greg Gibson

- Emilie Beltzer was voted/elected to serve as the committee chairperson

Topics of discussion:

- Adjunct instructor pay and benefits:
 - Agreement that adjunct pay per credit hour should be increased
 - Concern that adjuncts teaching a full load are not eligible for benefits – agreement that this should be changed so that full-time adjuncts are eligible to receive benefits
- Lowering student textbook costs:
 - Agreement that present textbook costs are unreasonably high and impose burden on most students
 - Simple comparison of textbook prices on Amazon compared to Henderson's bookstore demonstrates large textbook industry mark-up and profitability at the expense of students and/or their families
 - Members discussed textbook rental option for students and instructor use of older edition textbooks (assuming content across editions remains largely unchanged)
- Introducing faculty merit/bonuses for accomplishments in areas of teaching, scholarship, and service:
 - Members agreed that implementing merits/bonuses would be a meaningful practice to promote faculty productions within said areas
 - Discussed similar practices in other academic/collegiate contexts, like sports in which coaches receive bonuses when teams/athletes perform well
 - Agreed that a description as to what would qualify a merit/bonus would need to be developed, including the monetary amount of each merit/bonus and whether the merit/bonus qualifications would be department-specific
- Online courses at Henderson:
 - Members discussed prospective benefits of expanding Henderson's online education program beyond the state of Arkansas so to attract more students at an international level, but concerns raised regarding higher tuition costs for students outside of Arkansas (out-of-state tuition)
 - The need for transparency in tuition fees across all academic contexts, whether that be traditional or online classes, or fees charged to faculty/faculty family members enrolled in classes
 - Agreement that students (current and prospective) should have access to a breakdown in tuition fees; what students pay for

- Promoting student enrollment and retention by means of more student-centered activities and a Student Center on campus for student gatherings
- Committee meetings:
 - Members will meet twice every month (every two weeks) unless otherwise decided
 - The next committee meeting will be scheduled on/around Tuesday, March 1st at 12:30 PM
 - Chair will confirm with the rest of the committee the day/time and will secure a location